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Cigarette Smoking and Early Menopause

WE STARTED LOOKING at our data for one reason or another on menopause and at the same time we were looking at our data on smoking. So we looked at the two of them combined and, lo and behold, we found that there is a striking relationship between smoking and age of menopause. A summary of data . . . shows that women who smoke tend to have an earlier menopause, and the more a woman smokes the earlier the menopause. At age 48-49, for example, among 195 never-smokers only 26 percent were postmenopausal at that time; among heavy smokers, almost twice as many, 46 percent, were postmenopausal; at 50-51, 56 percent of never-smokers, 79 percent of heavy smokers were postmenopausal.

—HERSCHEL JICK, MD, *Boston*

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